

safety and for the well-being of family and friends. By taking appropriate precautions, we can all enjoy our Nation's waterways safely and securely.

In recognition of the importance of safe boating practices, the Congress, by joint resolution approved June 4, 1958 (36 U.S.C. 131), as amended, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim annually the 7-day period ending on the last Friday before Memorial Day as "National Safe Boating Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22 through 28, 1999, as National Safe Boating Week. I encourage the governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to join in observing this occasion and to urge all Americans to practice safe boating habits not only during this week, but also throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7199 of May 21, 1999

National Maritime Day, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The history of the United States has always been linked to the sea. For more than 2 centuries, American ships and crews have made enormous contributions to the strength of our economy, the security of our shores, and the success of our efforts to create a more peaceful, prosperous world.

Today's U.S. Merchant Marine is building on that rich maritime heritage. Our commercial ships and marine infrastructure—and the dedicated men and women who are part of our maritime industry and U.S. Merchant Marine—continue to meet the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing marketplace and the expanding globalization of trade. Our merchant fleet is a key component of our Nation's intermodal transportation system, carrying more than one billion tons of cargo between domestic ports and supporting our connection to overseas markets. The fleet helps facilitate our engagement in world affairs and helps protect U.S. national security interests.

Recognizing that a strong America requires a strong merchant marine, my Administration has worked closely with the Congress to promote the development and maintenance of a modern, efficient, well-balanced merchant fleet, capable of facilitating international commerce and meeting the military needs of our Armed Forces during times of conflict or national emergency. Through the Maritime Security Program and the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement, which implement the Maritime Security Act of 1996, we have forged new public-private partnerships to ensure that our

country will maintain a modern commercial fleet owned and operated by U.S. citizens and crewed by well-trained, highly skilled American sailors. We have strengthened U.S. shipyards through the National Shipbuilding Initiative. We also have helped keep our shipbuilding industry competitive in the global marketplace by providing financing guarantees, granting tax deferrals, and making it easier to operate ships under the U.S. flag.

The United States Merchant Marine has served our Nation boldly and well through challenge and change. As we enter a new century, we must reaffirm our commitment to this proud legacy. We must maintain the strength and vitality of our merchant fleet and the skills and training of the men and women who have made America a great maritime Nation. By doing so, we will ensure that U.S.-flag vessels continue to sail the world's oceans, preserving our leadership of the global economy, strengthening our prosperity, and defending our freedom for generations to come.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1999, as National Maritime Day. I urge all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and by displaying the flag of the United States in their homes and in their communities. I also request that all merchant ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7200 of May 22, 1999

Small Business Week, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

From the Industrial Revolution to the Information Age, small businesses have powered the American economy and created much of our prosperity. Generations of entrepreneurs have found in small businesses an outlet for their creativity, the source of their livelihood, and a chance to share in the American Dream. Millions of American consumers have found in small businesses the innovative products and vital services they need to improve the quality of their lives.

Today, America's 24 million small businesses employ more than half our country's work force and generate more than \$16 trillion in revenue—more than 50 percent of our gross domestic product. Small firms are also a true avenue of opportunity for women and minorities, for older and younger